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IN THE ABSTRACT:

— Please cancel the present Abstract and insert the new Abstract which is set forth on a separate sheet of paper.

REMARKS

In paragraph 1 of the Office Action, the Examiner objected to the Abstract. In response, the original Abstract has been canceled and a new Abstract in conformance with 37 CFR§1.72(b) is being submitted on a separate sheet of paper. The title has been amended to adopt the title that was suggested by Examiner. For these reasons, it is requested that the objections to the Abstract and Title be withdrawn.

In paragraph 5 of the Office Action, an objection was made to the description of the drawings with regard to the use of the same reference characters to designate different elements. The specification has been amended to correct the noted errors and it believed that the basis for the objection to the drawings has been eliminated.

In paragraph 6 of the Office Action, the claims were objected to as not commencing on a separate sheet of paper. By this Amendment, all of the original claims have been canceled and new claims 11-17 have been added to the application. This Amendment also obviates the rejection to canceled claims 5 and 6.

In paragraph 7 of the Office Action, claims 4, 5, 6, and 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter that the applicant regards as the invention.

Claims 1-10 have been canceled and new claim 12 corresponds to former claim 4. The text of claim 12 has been prepared to provide a proper antecedent basis for the

term "transparent resin keytop". Former claim 9 is new claim 16 and that claim has been drafted to provide a proper antecedent basis for the term "fitting portions". For these reasons, it is requested that the newly presented claims be favorably considered.

In paragraph 9 of the Office Action, claims 4, 7 and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Inagaki et al. (Inagaki). Former claim 4 is new claim 11 and claims 7 and 8 have been rewritten as new claims 13 and 14.

Reconsideration is requested.

The Inagaki reference discloses a keytop sheet for push-button switches in which patterned film is fixed to an upper surface and side surfaces of the keytop. In the Inagaki patent, keytops are covered by one film sheet, and all keytops are connected by the one film sheet. This arrangement fails to anticipate the claims of the present application because, in the present application, each key is not joined at the film base and the keys are separate from one another. In the method of manufacturing an illuminated keypad key according to the present invention, the use of a laser is eliminated and the printed pattern (character) layer is easily formed using a printing technique. Moreover, because the film of one key top is isolated from other key tops, it does not affect the operation of any of the neighboring key tops. This feature makes it possible to reliably carry out ON/OFF operations for any key top.

Consequently, the present invention makes it possible to easily and cheaply provide an illuminated keypad key, in which an operating key may be given a rubber-like click sensitivity and a rubber-like elasticity. The key top portion is made from a rigid resin, and a reliably strong bond is created between the key operating portion and the key top. For these reasons, it is requested that this ground of rejection be withdrawn.

In paragraph 10 of the Office Action, claims 5

and 6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by Takii et al. (Takii). Claims 5 and 6 have been canceled and are no longer at issue in this application.

In paragraph 11 of the Office Action, claim 1 and 3 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over Takii in view of Kenmochi. Claims 1 and 3 have been canceled and are no longer at issue in the present application.

In paragraph 12 of the Office Action, claims 9 and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Inagaki in view of Norris. Claims 9 and 10 have been rewritten as claims 15 and 16.

Reconsideration is requested.

The Inagaki patent discloses a keytop in which a lower portion of the operating shaft of the transparent resin keytop is not fitted into a concave portion formed in a central portion of the upper surface of the transparent rubber key operating portion, and the fitted portions are not bonded by means of a transparent adhesive. The operating shaft is not fitted into an insertion hole and not bonded in place by means of a transparent adhesive.

The Norris reference discloses a switching apparatus in which a stem of a keycap projects down through a hole of a plate, and a stem is not fitted with an adhesive. The switch of Norris is a double contact switch which is distinct type of switch which requires a frame to maintain stability. On the contrary, the present invention does not require a frame for stability.

In the illumination key of the present invention, the lower portion of the operating shaft of the keytop is fitted into the concave portion formed in the central portion of the upper surface of the key operating portion when the contact surface of the keytop and key operating portion are bonded together. This makes it possible to carry out a vertical bonding which results in improved bonding strength between the keytop and the key operating portion as compared to the bonding strength achieved by

horizontal bonding. This is the result even though the contact surface which is bonded is quite small. Furthermore, by forming a protruding portion on the central portion of the upper surface of the key operating portion, and by fitting and bonding the operating shaft of the keytop into the insertion hole of the protruding portion, according to claim 10, it is possible to achieve an even higher effective bond strength. For these reasons, it is requested that this ground of rejection be withdrawn.

The Examiner is thanked for his courtesy in indicating that claim 2 contained allowable subject matter. Claim 2 has been canceled and rewritten as new claim 11 in order to include all of the limitations of former base claim 1. For this reason, it is requested that claim 11 be allowed.

An early and favorable action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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